NNHS NEWS LETTER

Northville Northampton Historical Society

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Editor
Gail M Cramer

GRADUATION AT NCS

will soon be here

The history of the education in the Town of Northampton and the Village of Northville is a very interesting topic. The local historian is compiling a book of the history, with pictures, from 1800 to present day. Hopefully the book will be finished by the end of this summer, maybe before.

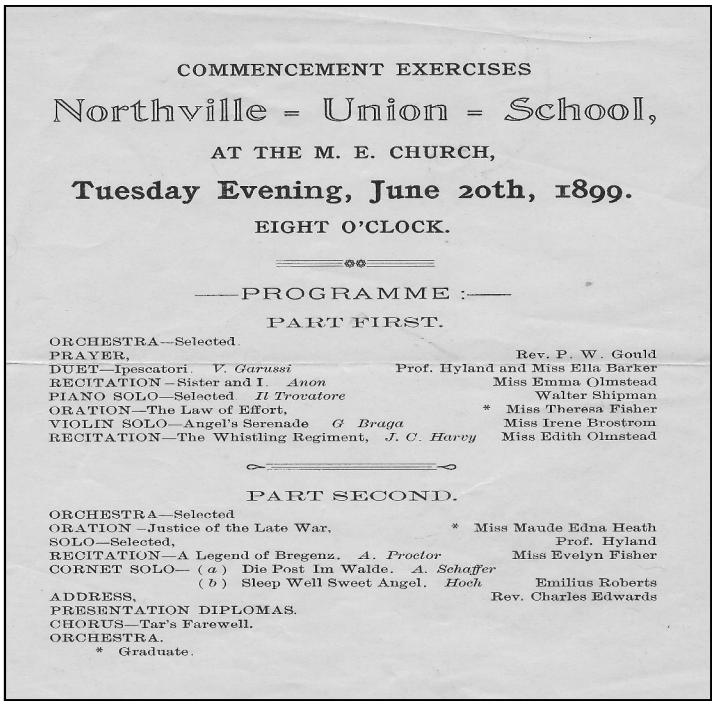
The first school in the Town of Northampton was at Fish House/Northampton. In 1800 a school was built in the village of Northville. It was located on the lot north of the South Main Street cemetery.

It is known that in 1813 that the Town was divided in 13 Sole Trustee Common School Districts. Which resulted in 13 one room school houses (see NNHS May 13, 2013)

Unfortunately most of the early school records disappeared. We have the hand written records from 1876 to 1905, in regards to the Union Free School. We also have the school records of Gifford's Corner School (1824 - 1869) and the Maple Grove School 1904 - 1928 and some from Fish House.

Union Free School
Record Book
1876 - 1905

The first graduate from the Union Free Academic Department was Julia Benton in 1895. A commencement program has not been located for that year. On the right is a commencement program for 1899. Graduation ceremonies were held in the Methodist Church.



COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

Northville = Union = School,

AT THE M. E. CHURCH,

Tuesday Evening, June 20th, 1899.

EIGHT O'CLOCK.

—PROGRAMME :—

PART FIRST.

ORCHESTRA—Selected.
PRAYER, Rev. P. W. Gould
DUET—Ipescatori. *V. Garussi* Prof. Hyland and Miss Ella Barker
RECITATION—Sister and I. *Anon* Miss Emma Olmstead
PIANO SOLO—Selected *Il Trovatore* Walter Shipman
ORATION—The Law of Effort, * Miss Theresa Fisher
VIOLIN SOLO—Angel's Serenade *G Braga* Miss Irene Brostrom
RECITATION—The Whistling Regiment, *J. C. Harvey* Miss Edith Olmstead

PART SECOND.

ORCHESTRA—Selected
ORATION—Justice of the Late War, * Miss Maude Edna Heath
SOLO—Selected, Prof. Hyland
RECITATION—A Legend of Bregenz. *A. Proctor* Miss Evelyn Fisher
CORNET SOLO—(*a*) Die Post Im Walde. *A. Schaffer*
(*b*) Sleep Well Sweet Angel. *Hoch* Emilius Roberts
ADDRESS, Rev. Charles Edwards
PRESENTATION DIPLOMAS.
CHORUS—Tar's Farewell.
ORCHESTRA.

* Graduate.

MUSEUM NEWS

It's almost that time again to open our Historical School House museum. Much has to be done, such as cleaning cases, dusting everything, washing windows, wiping down cob webs, and the floors attract leaves, dust, and varmint tracks.

Boxes of artifacts have to be sorted and put back in display cases. More contributions have been donated over the winter months, so they need to be placed in appropriate cases etc.

We are looking forward to another good summer with many visitors from near and far. Last year we recorded 632 guests, from 13 states and several countries. Not every visitor signs so we don't have an accurate count.

EXCERPTS FROM THE UNION FREE SCHOOL RECORDS

1892 the first janitor, Ed Roberts, was hired for the school at a salary of $100. a year. His duties were as follows:

Sweep the rooms and halls at least twice a week
Dust desks and seats after each sweeping
Collect and burn all waste papers
Tend to the furnace when heat is required
Remove ashes from the basement
Keep all walks clear of snow and ice
Rake and clean the school yard each Spring
Mop all rooms at least twice a year after mud season
General supervision over building and grounds
And specifically see that no horses and cattle are driven across the school grounds

1895 the first truant officer was appointed. His fee was set at $1. for each student brought in by him.

1896 there was need for more room for the primary department. It was decided to rent a room in the Old Methodist church for $4. a month. Miss Ada Burr of Gloversville was hired for $8.00 per week.

1904 a new addition was added to the rear of the original school building.

1906 it was brought to the attention of the board that there was a growing disregard of the Compulsory Education Law. Edgar L Sanford, Truant Officer, was instructed to arrested any or all school children and parents of the same who were absent from school without proper excuse and bring them before a magistrate.

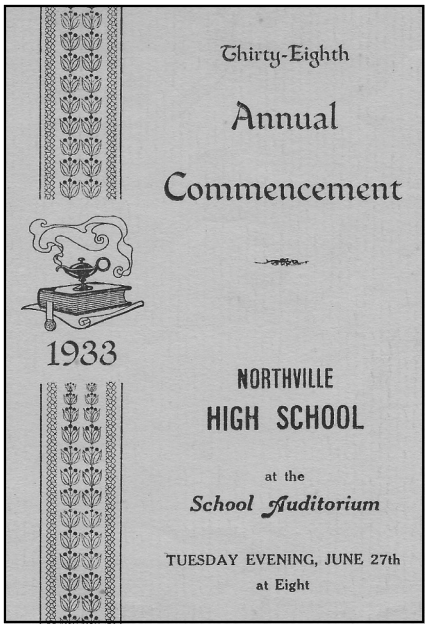
1911, The Board suggested that the ministers of the various churches be invited to give a short talk each Monday morning at the assembly exercises. Rev. Fraser, Presbyterian pastor, sounded out the other ministers and reported that they all had agreed.

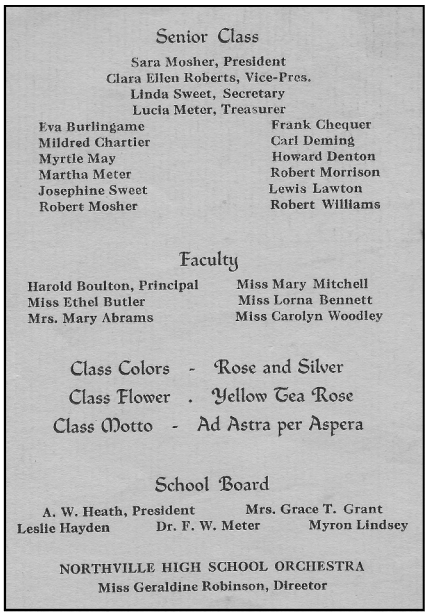
1916, the Health Department closed the school for two weeks due to an epidemic of diphtheria.

1916 the first Physical Education Teacher was hired. Miss Edna Cooper was engaged in conjunction with the schools in Mayfield and Broadalbin. Northville and Broadalbin for 2 days, Mayfield 1 day.

1920 another addition was built on the school building/ At a cost of $12,451.44.

1928 discussions were being had to form a Central School District. 17 taxpayers of the district presented a proposition /petition to the Board of Education.


Thirty-Eighth
Annual
Commencement
1933
NORTHVILLE
HIGH SCHOOL
at the
School Auditorium
TUESDAY EVENING, JUNE 27th
at Eight


Senior Class
Sara Mosher, President
Clara Ellen Roberts, Vice-Pres.
Linda Sweet, Secretary
Lucia Meter, Treasurer
Eva Burlingame
Mildred Chartier
Myrtle May
Martha Meter
Josephine Sweet
Robert Mosher
Frank Chequer
Carl Deming
Howard Denton
Robert Morrison
Lewis Lawton
Robert Williams
Faculty
Harold Boulton, Principal
Miss Ethel Butler
Mrs. Mary Abrams
Miss Mary Mitchell
Miss Lorna Bennett
Miss Carolyn Woodley
Class Colors - Rose and Silver
Class Flower . Yellow Tea Rose
Class Motto - Ad Astra per Aspera
School Board
A. W. Heath, President
Mrs. Grace T. Grant
Leslie Hayden
Dr. F. W. Meter
Myron Lindsey
NORTHVILLE HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA
Miss Geraldine Robinson, Director

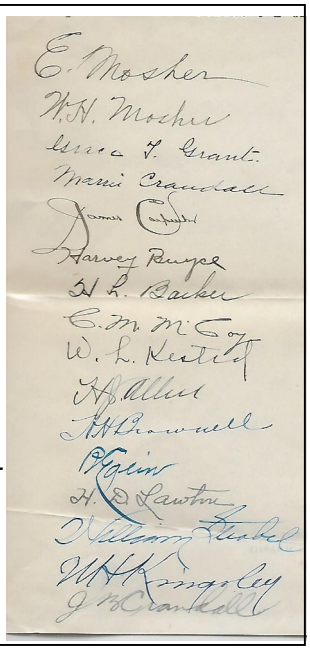
1933 the new Central School building was completed and the 1933 graduating class held their commencement in the new auditorium, even though the class had not actually attended classes in the new building.

November 1936 a special meeting of the Board was held to discuss disposing of the old school property. It was decided to offer the property to the Serfis Glove Company of Gloversville for $5,000.

1938 it was voted by the Board at the request of the Chamber of Commerce to have the word, Northville" with a direction arrow painted on the roof of the school building for the aid of flyers.

PETITION

"Now therefore, we, the undersigned, residents and taxable inhabitants of such central rural school district, do hereby request that a meeting of the inhabitants of such district be called and held to vote upon the following questions: Shall a central rural school district be organized as laid out by the Commissioner of Education and a central school be established therein under the provisions of Article 6B of the Education Law?



NORTHVILLE VETERANS

Northville is honored to have numerous honorable veterans that have participated in many conflicts, amongst them Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Civil War, WW1. WW2, Korean, Vietnam, and other conflicts. Below is a Navy veteran, Walter B Russell., who served in WW 1 as Navy Chief Petty Officer. He retired a Lieutenant Commander. He was a radio operator aboard troop transports. During the war he made 24 crossings. In 1929 Walter was instrumental in communications during a huge ice storm in Niagara Falls. All normal communications were shut down. Walter and two other broadcasters were able to provide communications over short wave radio. It was said," these 3 men saved the day and safeguarded the lives of men out working on the lines."

My Grandfather

Walter B. Russell

By Robin Russell Gaiser

W2OE were his call letters for as long as he could tap out Morse Code in rapid fire sitting at his ham radio rig in the back room off the kitchen in the yellow Duncan house on Prospect Hill. He and his second wife, the late Charlotte Duncan Russell lived there until his death in 1978.

Not that Walter was new to Northville or even new to the Duncan house, He was born in 1898 to Carrie Cole Russell and Rev Maurice B Russell, who met at the Northville Baptist Church where she was the organist and choir director and he was the preacher.

Walter frequented the yellow Duncan home courting the tall beautiful Esther Duncan, a young teacher and eldest daughter of Charles and Nora Duncan. Their marriage produced five children, my father Maurice D. Russell, was the second eldest of the clan, and I was the first born of 20 grand children.

Despite my own family's moves away from my grandparents, my grandfather and I remained in close contact. Daily he sent ham radio messages to all our extended family so he knew the comings and goings of each other, coast to coast. He and I shared a love of ice cream and music. As a child, he insured I had money to buy myself a daily ice cream cone by secretly pressing coins into my hand or leaving change on my bedstead each morning.

He admired my musical gifts and sent me my first classical music vinyl lp records, violin concertos and symphonies I still love to this day. I recall holding his hand and singing the Sunday church hymns together at the Northville Methodist Church. He sang tenor, and I alto.

After my Grandma Ester died and he married Esther's youngest sister, Charlotte. Great Aunt Char became Grandma Char. I often wonder what she thought when she inherited our huge family. Like her sister, my Grandma Ester, she never forgot anniversaries, birthday's or holidays. Vacations were spent visiting family, especially for reunions held on the side yard of the yellow Duncan house.

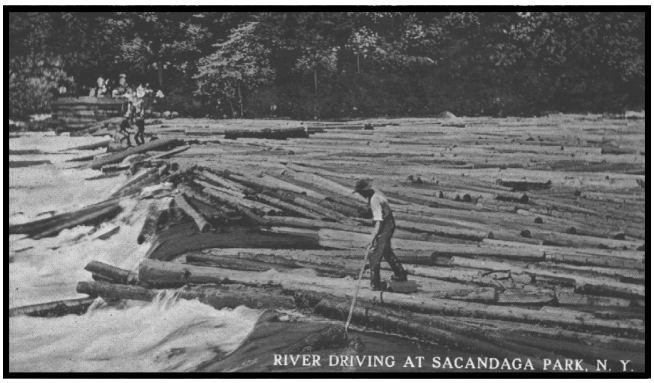
Walter and Esther

My grandfather adored us all. When he held his first great grandchild our son, Adam Russell Gaiser, he remarked with tears in his eyes, "I never thought I would get to see this". My husband Gordon and I snapped a photo of Adam wearing his visiting great grandfather's headphones listen intently to the dit dit dah's of the ham radio set perched on our living room side table.

I have to chuckle thinking what my grandfather might say about electronic communications these days. He'd shake his head the way he always did when something tickled his fancy, and I bet he'd have the latest computer set up in the radio room off the kitchen, with new call letters for exchanging family messages. It would be: W2OE@gmail.com

Walter's second wife, Charlotte Duncan Russell

Currently the historian and Skip Thompson are working on collecting pictures and recording our honored men and women who have served from Northville.

RIVER DRIVING
ON THE SACANDAGA RIVER
At Northville and Sacandaga Park

When the logs floating on the rivers would jam, the "river drivers" would have to release them so they could flow down the river. This job required some understanding of physics, strong muscles, and extreme agility. The jam crew was an exceedingly dangerous occupation, with the drivers standing on the moving logs and running from one to another. Many drivers lost their lives by falling and being crushed by the logs.